

Message Text

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46

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PC-04 AID-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 OC-06 CCO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 NIC-01 OMB-01 OPR-02 SCCT-02 SY-04 USSS-00 A-01

DRC-01 /108 W

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P R 051451Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5235

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3918

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, NU

SUBJECT: CIVIC DISTURBANCES IN MATAGALPA

REF: MANAGUA 3530

SUMMARY: TWO DAYS OF CIVIC DISTURBANCES IN MATAGALPA GROWING OUT OF COMPETING ELECTORAL CLAIMS OCCURRED OCT. 2-3. SOMOZA CONCERNED ABOUT EVENTS AND IN QUANDARY ABOUT HOW TO RESOLVE RIVAL CLAIMS. END SUMMARY.

1. CITY OF MATAGALPA ERUPTED IN TWO DAYS OF CIVIC DISTURBANCES OCT 2-3 IN PROTEST OF ALLEGED ATTEMPT TO STEAL MAYORAL ELECTION
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HELD SEPTEMBER 1 FROM CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE. TOWNSPEOPLE

DRAPED HOUSES AND STORES WITH BLACK BANNERS AS SIGN OF MOURNING, HELD MOCK FUNERAL FOR JUAN PALACIOS, LOCAL LIBERAL CACIQUE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ELECTORAL CONTROVERSY. NATIONAL GUARD USED TEAR GAS GRENADES LIBERALLY AS YOUNGER ELEMENTS RAMPAGED THROUGH THE STREETS THROWING ROCKS AND BOTTLES AT AUTHORITIES. NATIONAL GUARD REPORTEDLY ACTED WITH RESTRAINT. NINE WERE ARRESTED AND NINETEEN INJURED.

2. LOCAL NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDER GENERAL GUILLEN, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY CAUSED CONSTERNATION IN LIBERAL PARTY CIRCLES BY DEMONSTRATING SYMPATHY TOWARD CONSERVATIVE (BUT PRO-SOMOZA) CANDIDATE AMADOR (SEE REFTTEL), ISSUED CALMING STATEMENT CALLING ON PEOPLE OF MATAGALPA TO SEEK REDRESS THROUGH LEGAL MEANS AND CHARGING HOST OF SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATIONS WITH FOMENTING VIOLENCE. GUILLEN ALSO BRIEFED PRESS THAT DEPARTMENTAL ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL HAD REPORTED 1200 VOTE AMADOR MARGIN TO SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL IN MANAGUA IN DIRECT CONTRADICTION TO ASSERTIONS BY NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY LEADERSHIP.

3. SOMOZA TOLD AMBASSADOR OCT 3 THAT HE DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT EVENTS IN MATAGALPA AND IN QUANDARY ABOUT HOW TO RESOLVE SITUATION. SOMOZA'S DILEMMA, IS CREATED BY HIS PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP FOR AMADOR, AND AMADOR'S BIPARTISAN SUPPORT ON THE ONE HAND VERSUS LIBERAL PARTY OBLIGATIONS ON OTHER. BUILLEN'S ATTITUDE WHICH PUTS A HIGH-RANKING GUARD OFFICER IN OPPOSITION TO THE PARTY IS ALSO CAUSING DISMAY AMONG SOMOZA'S CLOSEST ADVISORS.

4. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT NEW ELECTIONS WILL PROBABLY BE HELD NEXT MONTH IN BOACO WHERE A CONSERVATIVE VICTORY WAS IMPUGNED. IF SO, IT WOULD BE EASIER TO MAKE SIMILAR DECISION IN MUCH MORE SENSITIVE MATAGALPA CASE.

5. COMMENT: FACTORS PRECIPITATING MATAGALPA DISTURBANCES ARE SO UNIQUE AS TO PRECLUDE ANY REPETITION ELSEWHERE. NEVERTHELESS, BECAUSE OF THE INFREQUENCY OF SUCH BREACHES OF POLITICAL ORDER AND ESPECIALLY BECAUSE OF THE LOCAL BREAKDOWN IN SOMOCISTA UNITY, THE MATAGALPA EVENTS ARE CERTAIN TO BE CAREFULLY STUDIED BY SOMOZA.

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